

# US involvement in the Vietnam War, 1954-75

## Key terms/concepts

### Key Events

<b>1954</b> Defeat at Dien Bien Phu leads to French withdrawal
<b>1956</b> Ndo Dinh Diem refuses to hold elections
<b>1961</b> President Kennedy increases US involvement in Vietnam
<b>1963</b> Quang Duc, a Buddhist monk, sets fire to himself in Saigon
<b>1964</b> Gulf of Tonkin
<b>1964</b> Operation Rolling Thunder launched
<b>1968</b> Battle for Khe Sanh and Teto Offensive
<b>1968</b> My Lai massacre
<b>1968</b> President Johnson decides not to run for a second term and Nixon becomes President
<b>1969</b> US opens secret peace talks with North Vietnam
<b>1970</b> US and South Vietnamese forces briefly invade Cambodia
<b>1971</b> US and South Vietnamese forces attack Laos
<b>1972</b> North Vietnamese Easter Offensive
<b>1972</b> US launch Operation Linebacker
1973 Paris Peace Accords
1975 Saigon falls to the North Vietnamese Army

<b>Colony</b>	A place controlled by another country, politically and economically
<b>Communist</b>	A communist government owns all the businesses and land in the country it controls. Everyone works for the government. In return, the government provides everyone in the country with everything they need.
<b>Dien Bien Phu</b>	A place in North Vietnam where the Vietminh beat the French in battle
<b>ARVN</b>	Army of the Republic of Vietnam - South Vietnamese army
<b>Vietcong/NVA</b>	North Vietnamese Army
<b>Accord</b>	A formal agreement
<b>DMZ (demilitarised zone)</b>	An area where all military activity is forbidden
<b>Domino theory</b>	The fear that once one country falls to communism, others will follow
<b>Limited war</b>	A war where a country supports a side in a conflict by, for example, sending them supplies and training their troops, but not by sending any of their own troops to fight
<b>Referendum</b>	A countrywide vote on a single issue
<b>Ho Chi Minh Trail</b>	The trail used by the Vietcong that runs through Laos and Cambodia from North Vietnam to South Vietnam. It was used to send supplies and support.
<b>Guerrillas</b>	Fighters who avoid big battles and attack their enemy by blowing up roads and bridges, ambushing them and striking them with sudden 'hit and run' attacks
<b>Counter-insurgency</b>	Fighting guerrillas both by military attacks and by winning the support of the local population
<b>Pacification</b>	Winning over the 'hearts and minds' of the local population, so they do not support guerrillas
<b>Strategic Hamlet Program</b>	Large new villages (surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by the ARVN) with facilities such as schools and clinics
<b>Gulf of Tonkin Resolution</b>	Allowed Johnson to do what he thought was needed to defend South Vietnam and US forces there
<b>Search and destroy</b>	The main counter-insurgency tactic against the Vietcong. Small US units searched for VC camps and supplies and bombed/destroyed them
<b>Vietnamisation</b>	Application of the Nixon Doctrine by withdrawing troops without looking like they'd been defeated
<b>Conscription</b>	Compulsory military service
<b>Desertion</b>	Leaving the army without permission

# Reactions to US involvement in the Vietnam War, 1964-75

## Key Questions - Answer

## Key terms/concepts

<p><b>How much did attitudes to the Vietnam War change during this period?</b></p>	
<p><b>How did individuals impact the Vietnam War?</b></p>	
<p><b>Where is there evidence of key turning points in the Vietnam War?</b></p>	
<p><b>Why were the Vietnamese in a strong position in the Vietnam War?</b></p>	

<p><b>Opinion poll</b></p>	<p>A test of public opinion where the same questions are asked of a large number of people. The answers are then analysed to show public feeling.</p>
<p><b>Counter-demonstration</b></p>	<p>A demonstration held to show opposition to a demonstration taking place at the same time</p>
<p><b>Counter-culture</b></p>	<p>Refusing to live by the cultural rules of your society. For the USA at the time, this was following the accepted rules for success: work hard, earn and spend wages, and obey the government</p>
<p><b>Conscientious objector (CO)</b></p>	<p>A person whose religious beliefs mean they will not fight. In 1966, the US military extended this to include beliefs such as Buddhism.</p>
<p><b>Red scare</b></p>	<p>‘Red’ was a term applied to communists. The ‘Red Scare’ was when many Americans feared US communists would start a revolution</p>
<p><b>Patriotism</b></p>	<p>The love of, and loyalty to, one’s country</p>
<p><b>Hard hats</b></p>	<p>A nickname for construction workers who demonstrated in 1970</p>
<p><b>The ‘silent majority’</b></p>	<p>Nixon’s name for Americans who mainly supported his policies, but did not actively campaign either for or against the war</p>
<p><b>Political historian</b></p>	<p>Interested in leaders, their views and actions and the effects these had on history</p>
<p><b>Economic historian</b></p>	<p>Interested in how economic conditions changed, and how this affected politics and society</p>
<p><b>Cultural historians</b></p>	<p>Interested in changes in how people think, what they read and listen to and their day-to-day lives</p>